

Statement of Teaching Philosophy – Jennifer L. Mintzer

I base my approach to teaching on a feminist pedagogical model that stresses individual empowerment of the student through the recognition and validation of one's own personal experiences. Feminist pedagogy stresses multiple voices with equal validity, rather than one central body of knowledge as being "correct." In order to make knowledge relevant and pertinent, I feel that it is important for students to draw on their personal experiences while learning about a topic, to constantly reflect on their own knowledge and to ask questions – challenging various theories in order to cement a greater understanding of the concepts involved. Trust and respect are emphasized as a means of creating a comfort level for students to develop their ideas and questions in the classroom.

The three principles that define my teaching style are as follows:

- to strive for egalitarian relationships in the classroom
- to try to make all students feel valued as individuals
- to use the experience of students as a learning resource

In my view, the role of the teacher is to provide guidance and to help provide the intellectual and practical resources students need in order to gain a deeper understanding of any given field. In bringing the student the resources and in facilitating discussion about various topics, the goal is to help the student further develop a sense of empowerment and capability in him/herself.